

Source:

Fant, et. al., Chapter 11, pp. 205 – 219
John Collins, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, Chapter 18, the Exilic Period, pp. 353-377

Exilic period

- a. Traumatic and creative
- b. Hebrews stripped of everything that gave meaning: Holy City, Temple, Davidic monarchy
- c. Two voices with two views
 - i. Ezekiel & 2 Isaiah
 - ii. D and Priestly history

Historic Situation

1. Judah in ruin
 - a. Moral glue destroyed
 - b. 50 years of suffering
2. Remainers
 - a. Lament – loss of Jerusalem
 - b. Anger toward captors
 - i. God would be vengeful
 - c. Hostility toward neighbors who failed to support them
 - i. Obadiah seethes with anger against Edom
 - d. Gods of the victor were superior
 - i. Some gave up the faith to a “weaker” god
 - e. Judgment of YHWH to an unfaithful people
 - i. Israel could repent and return to the covenant
3. Deportees
 - a. Less than ideal but sustained themselves well. Some thrived

Exilic Prophets – Ezekiel and 2nd Isaiah

1. Ezekiel
 - a. Part of the first deportation in 597 with ruling class
 - b. Rec'd the call on 593
 - c. Served as priest and prophet for 593-571 in Babylon
 - d. Scholars not sure where he wrote
 - e. Book
 - i. Chapters 1 – 24
 1. Warnings and Judgments
 2. Vision of Call – Saw God throne chariot vision
 - a. Throne in cloud, wind and fire (Chapters 1- 3)
 - b. Eagle, lion, man
 - c. Mere human in the presence of awesome holiness of God
 3. Chapters 4 – 24 contains several themes of judgment
 - a. Throughout history, Israel has rebelled against God
 - i. Never a time of innocence and purity
 - b. Infidelity to God, worship of foreign deities
 - c. Constructing political alliances with the unclean
 - d. Did not acknowledge the sovereignty of God

4. Symbolic acts to tell of judgments - 8 illustrations
 - a. Shaves head and beard and divides into 3 portions
 - i. One-third = sack of Jerusalem
 - ii. One-third = chops with sword = people killed in siege
 - iii. One-third = scatters to wind = people in exile
- ii. Chapters 25-32
 1. Judgment against neighbors
 2. God's sovereignty over other nations
 3. Nation after nation guilty in series of oracles
- iii. Chapters 33-48
 1. Written during 2nd deportation in 587
 2. Hope for a restored Jerusalem
 3. Ezekiel 34:11-15 as a shepherd ...
 4. Three images
 - a. Dry bones
 - b. Restoration of the temple
 - c. People come back to worship in the Temple
 - i. Chapters 40 -48 model to which post exilic jews looked as they rebuild Judah

SECOND ISAIAH (2I)

Unknown prophet who composed elegant poems of Isaiah 40 – 55 that upheld the traditions of hope and restoration

Book is dated 540

Chapter 40 **2I** believes exile's captivity will end because penalty is paid. Prophet words of comfort, misery and hardship is over.

Cyrus victories part of God's plan.

God is the source of all creation, Lord of history, who subdues the nations.

Because of this Jerusalem should herald his coming. Hope rests in God alone. "I am God and there is no other" – radical monotheism.

1. This base brings hope, this is a new Exodus, delivering the exiles back from Babylon.
2. Zion is the special dwelling place for God and people
3. Above is possible because for **2I** God as creator has subdued chaos and brought a created order. Therefore capable of reconstituting the people in a new creative act.
4. Covenantal relationship is at core of **2I** vision of hope
5. Servant of God appears as the proper understanding of divine-human encounter.
 - a. Who is the Servant?
 - i. Individual or group of individuals? Nation?
 - ii. No consensus
 - b. Role of Servant is to represent God to all nations
 - i. Suffering servant on God's redemptive purpose.
 - ii. Core of Christian belief of death of Jesus in behalf of others.

Exilic Histories

1. D consists of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings
 - a. School of writers?
 - b. Religious interpretation of history of the divine- human encounter from Moses to the Exile.
 - c. Earliest theodices- national calamity to wealth by being the Chosen people of God
 - d. History is determined by the people's response to God
 - e. **Exiles as a ethical community in obedience to God's covenant**
2. Priestly History
 - a. Major literary traditions in Pentateuch
 - b. Emphasizes worship and ritual
 - c. Written in light of Exile devastation effects
 - d. Four periods
 - i. Creation to Flood
 1. Creation where people are in the image of God
 - ii. Noah and rainbow covenant
 - iii. Abraham to Moses
 - iv. Moses to Exile
 - e. Features
 - i. Everlasting covenant
 - ii. God appears in different names
 1. Elohim, El Shaddai, YHWH
 - iii. Genealogies of people in the covenant
 - f. **Exiles as a worshiping community, ritual purity in response to God's covenant.**